

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 AMMAN 00002 031430Z

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ACTION NODS-00

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 W

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FM AMEMBASSY AMMAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6529

S E C R E T AMMAN 0002

NODIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR UNSC XF

SUBJECT: UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MIDDLE EAST

REF: STATE 000173

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM CHARGE

1. AMBASSADOR PICKERING HAS REQUESTED THAT I FORWARD FOLLOWING BRIEF ACCOUNT OF HIS JAN 3 CONVERSATION WITH PM RIFAI WHICH TOOK PLACE JUST PRIOR TO AMBASSADOR'S DEPARTURE FOR CONSULTATIONS IN DEPARTMENT. FOLLOWING IS BASED ON NOTES ON POINTS AMBASSADOR GAVE ME ORALLY AND IS SUBJECT TO HIS REVIEW.

2. AMBASSADOR PASSED ON CONTENTS OF REFTEL TO RIFAI REGARDING JAN 12 SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MIDEAST PUTTING PRESENTATION IN CONTEXT OF FORTHCOMING RIFAI VISIT TO ASAD IN DAMASCUS. RIFAI'S UNCLE ABDUL MUNEIM RIFAI AND JORDAN UN PERMREP SHARAF WHO HAVE JUST RETURNED FROM SOVIET VISIT AND WHO WILL ACCOMPANY RIFAI TO SYRIA) WERE ALSO PRESENT.

3. RIFAI WAS PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN PARA 2 OF REFTEL MENTIONING US BELIEF IN IMPORTANCE OF ALL PARTIES MAINTAINING MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY AS THEY APPROACH COUNCIL MEETING. RIFAI SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THIS US ATTITUDE AND WOULD PASS THIS APPROACH ON SYRIANS IN HIS FORTHCOMING ATTEMPT TO WORK OUT WITH SYRIANS A ROUGH DRAFT ON POSSIBLE SC RESOLUTION.

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SECRET

PAGE 02 AMMAN 00002 031430Z

4. RIFAI SAID HE THOUGHT ANY RESOLUTION SHOULD CONTAIN INTER

ALIA LANGUAGE EMBODYING TWO PRINCIPLES A) SOME ALLUSION TO CONCEPT OF "PALESTINIAN RIGHTS" OR SOME SIMILAR FORMULATION AND B) PALESTINIAN (I PRESUME PLO) PARTICIPATION IN ANY NEGOTIATIONS. RIFAI THEN ASKED SPECIFICALLY IF THE US WOULD BE WILLING TO SUPPORT INCLUSION OF LANGUAGE REFERRING TO "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS" IN AN SC RESOLUTION. RIFAI SAID HE MADE DISTINCTION BETWEEN "INTERESTS" AND "NATIONAL RIGHTS" WITH LATTER BEING A MORE SWEEPING BUT STILL UNDEFINED CONCEPT.

5. IN REPLY AMBASSADOR STATED THAT AS RIFAI KNEW HE IS NOT AUTHORIZED TO NEGOTIATE REGARDING SC RESOLUTION. AMBASSADOR MADE PERSONAL OBSERVATION THAT THE TERM "PALESTINIAN INTERESTS" HAS SOMETIMES BEEN MENTIONED IN PAST US-SOVIET COMMUNIQUE BUT HE EMPHASIZED THAT BOTH THE LANGUAGE AND THE METHOD OF ITS INCORPORATION IN THE GENERAL CONTEXT OF THE SC PROCEEDINGS WOULD OBVIOUSLY BE A SIGNIFICANCE. IN ANY CASE AMBASSADOR WAS IN NO POSITION TO NEGOTIATE ISSUE.

6. RIFAI SAID JORDAN NEEDS TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE WHETHER US WILL STICK ONLY WITH LANGUAGE OF RES 242 AND 338 OR WHETHER THERE IS SOME FLEXIBILITY IN US POSITION. HE URGED AMBASSADOR TO COME BACK WITH A REPLY BUT AMBASSADOR SAID HE COULD MAKE NO PROMISES. RIFAI ADDED THAT ASAD TOLD HIM DAY AFTER ASAD MEETING WITH AHERTON THAT SYRIA TOO WISHES TO AVOID A COLLISION WITH US IN SECURITY COUNCIL DEBATE IF AT ALL POSSIBLE BUT THERE MUST BE SOME FLEXIBILITY IN US POSITION.

7. RIFAI ALSO MENTIONED KING HUSSEIN HAS SENT LETTER TO SADAT ASKING TO SEND HIGH LEVEL JORDANIAN DELEGATION TO EGYPT TO COORDINATE POSITIONS ON SC MEETING.

8. REQUEST DEPARTMENT PASS THIS MESSAGE VIA NIACT IMMEDIATE TO EMBASSY LONDON FOR AMBASSADOR PICKERING SUDDARTH

SECRET

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, MEETING REPORTS, UNSC RESOLUTIONS, CAT-C
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 03 JAN 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976AMMAN00002
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: P850107-2318
From: AMMAN
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19760188/aaaadaos.tel
Line Count: 95
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NODS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: NODIS
Reference: 76 STATE 173
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 12 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <12 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <05 OCT 2004 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: UN SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON MIDDLE EAST
TAGS: PFOR, PDEV, XF, US, JO, UNSC, (PICKERING, THOMAS R), (RIFAI, ZAYD)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006